Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 1 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 9 shows a schematic view of the image acquisition unit according to another embodiment of the present invention, including a warm air expulsion nozzle near the transparent element; and

Fig. 10 is a block diagram illustrating exemplary control of the heater of the image acquisition unit of the present invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

When using an electrical heater, preferably some control means 500 (~~not~~ shown in Fig. 10) are included to control its operation. The mentioned control means 500 may comprise, for example, an on/off switch 504 to control the activation time of said supply current of the electrical heater, and this on/off switch may be associated with or integrated in a thermostat 506 or located in the control panel 502 of the motor vehicle at a vehicle's user disposal. Advantageously, said on/off switch is common for one or more heating devices 508 of the vehicle, as for example a heating system of a rear window or a heating system of an exterior rear view mirror.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 11 with the following amended paragraph:

According to another variant, said control means 500 use a central processor of the vehicle, or on-board computer, associated with ~~an~~ man-machine interface 510 to provide different parameters arising from one or more detectors 512 associated to the image acquisition unit and/or to other parts of the vehicle, and/or from an input device at a vehicle's user disposal, to said computer, in which an adapted program has been loaded to control said supply current of the electrical heater throughout time as a function of the result of an analysis and a processing of said parameters, covering typically at least the temperature inside the casing 1 of the image acquisition unit and the exterior ambient temperature.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 18 with the following amended paragraph:

Finally, Fig. 9 shows another embodiment without electrical heater, in which the heating means comprise an air expulsion nozzle 20, located in the exterior of the casing 1 near the transparent element 3. The mentioned air expulsion nozzle 20 is connected to a heating or air conditioning system 30 of a vehicle's compartment through specific conductions 25. Casing 1 is mounted on an external structure 14 of the vehicle, so that the transparent element 3 is facing an opening 26 of said external structure 14 of the vehicle, which defines a visor 27 and a gutter 28 around the mentioned opening. So, when a motor vehicle's occupant turns on the heater or air conditioning to increase the temperature inside the compartment in relation to the exterior ambient temperature, the expulsed air by the air expulsion nozzle 20 creates a warm air curtain facing the external face of the transparent element 3, acting as a barrier avoiding the condensation of humidity and/or the creation of a layer of dew or ice on the transparent element 3 and, furthermore, provides an additional protection against water drops, no matter if the drops arise from rain or other sprinkling causes, and against dust particles and dirt.